

## ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMISSION

MINUTES of the Environment Scrutiny Commission held on Thursday 25 March 2021 at 6.30 pm at Online/Virtual. Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting. Please contact [FitzroyAntonio.williams@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:FitzroyAntonio.williams@southwark.gov.uk) for a link to the online meeting

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Jason Ochere (Chair)  
Councillor Graham Neale (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Tom Flynn  
Councillor Renata Hamvas  
Councillor Adele Morris  
Councillor Margy Newens  
Councillor Leanne Werner  
Jeremy Leach

**OTHER MEMBERS  
PRESENT:**

**OFFICER  
SUPPORT:** Simon Bevan, Director of Planning  
Tim Long, Team Leader Transport Policy  
Dale Foden, Head of Highways  
Julie Timbrell, Scrutiny Project Manager

**1. APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

**2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR  
DEEMS URGENT**

There were none.

**3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATION**

There were none.

#### 4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2021 will be approved at the next meeting.

#### 5. TRACKING ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORTS

The chair invited officers to briefly present and then take questions on the briefings provided to the commission in advance, updating members on progress on considering and implementing the following scrutiny review report recommendations:

- First report on the Climate Emergency road map, October 2019
- Second report on the Climate Emergency strategy, July 2020
- Air Quality, July 2020

**Tim Long, Team Leader Transport Policy, took questions on the briefing updating the commission on the air quality recommendations relevant to Transport Policy.**

The following points were made:

Members asked why Sustainable Freight is struggling. The officer responded that there are two reasons; the first is that the freight industry has a small profit margin so this makes it difficult to be flexible. The other barrier is the lack of distribution sites in the north of the borough, which may be because of the high rent and the low profit margin. The officer explained that the new technology is expensive so it does tend to be the large companies that do this. Sainsbury's have found it was possible, and as quick to use cycle freight to deliver food as vans.

Members asked if officers had engaged with Pedal Me, which have expanded with a new arch. The officer explained that that Pedal Me do one off deliveries rather than regular distribution. The council is most active in encouraging the movement of freight between hospitals by cargo bikes, which they are waiting to progress once a staff change has taken place.

Promotion of Scrappage schemes was asked about, in order to encourage the switch from more polluting vehicles and towards sustainable freight movement. There was a suggestion from a member for a scheme whereby businesses could try out trailers and e cargo bikes, to see if this was right for their business, prior to investing as this could demonstrate the amount of bulky freight that it is possible to move by bike. The officer said such a scheme might

be possible, but cautioned that it could be complicated and expensive to deliver something like this during a pandemic with limited resources.

Members asked about expansion of the Mayor of London's cycle hire scheme, and potential for this to expand to the south of borough. The officer explained that the Council is paying for installation in Bermondsey and developers are in Canada Water. He said that cycle hire will take longer to get to Peckham as more money is required to cover the south; however there is a potential down the Old Kent Road with regeneration.

Officers were asked about the regulation of scooters, which was indicated in the Queens speech. The UK is the last in Europe to allow for this and people are using these anyway. The officer explained that enforcement is with the police. The council is working with disabled people on this matter.

A member commented that the implementation of Low Traffic Neighbourhood has not been a very well managed process, and referred to particular frustrations with The Cut, designed by Lambeth officers, and then amended with Ward councillors and officers in response to constituent concerns.

The officer said that the Movement Plan is expect to be updated by end of year with an implementation plan that is presentably under development.

**Simon Bevan, Director of Planning, took question on the briefing provided to the commission on recommendations from previous reviews relevant to Planning.**

The following points were made:

The Director of Planning said that the Council is in the process of presenting the New Southwark Plan (NSP). The NSP was developed as the council was growing in awareness of the Climate Emergency, which was then declared in 2019. Once the NSP is agreed by the inspectors then the plan is to do a review to catch up to the Climate Emergency strategy, which is due to be agreed in June.

Planning are looking for more carbon to be met on site .The carbon offset fund price per tonne of carbon has been raised to £95, and this is under further review. The Carbon Offset Funds offers an opportunity to retrofit older houses, which are leaking the most energy. Officers are looking to incorporate a plan for delivering the Carbon Offset Fund in the Climate Emergency strategy.

Members asked how long it will take before the council can get to the point that developments do not require a Carbon Offset payment, including the council housing that the council is building. Officers said that this is going to keep the council exercised as schemes which are above 8 floors high are much more of a challenge than lower level housing , and as such Carbon Offset are the approach until technology improves .

The officer was asked if the council intend to go beyond 0.4 car parking provision. Officers agreed this was high and there was an intention to lower as the council is moving in the direction of car free developments.

**Dale Foden, Head of Highways, took questions on the briefing provided updating the commission on the latest position on School Streets and Cycle Hangers.**

Dale Foden explained that the council is aiming to double the amount of Cycle Hangers, following a successful growth bid. There is a waiting list of 7,000 people. The council is aiming to have 500 hangers. A limiting factor is output from manufacturing. It has been a success story this year with 100 delivered this year, and 150 planned next year.

Members asked about the choice of location and why there were many more in the south of the borough, particularly around Goose Green .The officer explained that previously this was mainly a result of obtaining funding from local Cleaner, Greener, and Safer funding pots as a result of community applications. Now officers are using a variety of measure to decide on locations including PTAL rating (amount of public transport), waiting lists, and requests. Members reflected that they recall applications in the north of the borough being approved when they came through so it is possible that fewer were made.

The officer went on to explain that there are now 38 School Streets in place, with 31 underway this year. As most schools are actually shut presently it has been challenge. The council is talking to about another 60 schools. Some schools do not wish to proceed for a variety of reasons. All Southwark schools have been contacted. Members enquired about the reasons for schools not wishing to proceed.

**RESOLVED**

Officers will provide insight and a summary for why some schools do not wish to proceed with School Streets.

## **6. PARKING BRIEFING**

The chair introduced the parking briefing by explaining that in November 2020 the commission had asked for a briefing on planned CPZs, parking permits and parking spaces, both on estates and street kerbside, by Ward. This is a follow up from the previous administrative year and linked to a recommendation in the previous air quality report that the kerbside ought to be considered a public amenity and repurposed for active travel. The chair then invited Dale Foden, Head of Highways, to take questions on the report.

A member asked about progress in producing the planned emissions based parking charging policy and officer explained that has not been progressed yet because of the pandemic. Members highlighted the importance of this.

The cost differential for permits on street versus on estates was noted as an area to address. A member also commented that the minority of residents have Parking Permits, for St George's this I in 14, and this is significant when it comes to Low Traffic Neighbourhoods as it is worth bearing in mind that car drivers are a small minority.

Officers were thanked for a comprehensive report.

## **7. SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORT : AIR QUALITY - PART TWO**

The chair encouraged Commission members to send through comments on the headline report and proposed recommendations, previously circulated via email.

## **8. SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORT : ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING**

Members discussed setting an ambition to achieve zero carbon emissions in buildings, through the planning process, with out resorting to Carbon Offsetting.

The chair encouraged Commission members to send through comments on the headline report and proposed recommendations, circulated via email.

## **9. WORK PROGRAMME**

A final meeting to agree the reports was agreed.